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THE  
PATH O' DREAMS

BY

THOMAS S. JONES, JR.





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# The Path o' Dreams





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Thomas S. Jones, Jr.



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TO  
ROBERT TANSEY LAUGHLIN

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## THE PATH o' DREAMS



## The Piper

We danced and sang through the sylvan glade  
As the piper played, as the piper played  
With never a thought of the joy he made;  
For his squeaking pipe was quaintly small  
And the rasping notes would break and fall.  
We thought it quite poor if we thought at all  
As the piper played.

The shadows were long in the sylvan glade  
As the price we paid, as the price we paid.  
We had little to give, else he might have  
stayed;  
But others must dance while he must play.  
Yet it seemed so strange he went away,  
For we didn't then know we had lived our day  
And the price was paid.

## Echo

And Spring withal is just across the way, —  
Though harsh and shrill the shifts of March  
    come blowing,  
The softened pipes of dreamy-sodden May  
Sound once again like forest streams a-flow-  
    ing.

O Songs of Yester-Spring that are no more,  
O Hours of Buried Youth, so sweet of yore,  
Down 'neath your grassy graves in endless  
    sleep  
I wonder if you wake, and hear, — and weep.

## At Dusk

A line of gold, a shade of withered rose  
Amid the gray, — oh, just a little while  
Before the night; as though day could not  
    close  
Its eyes in sleep without one last sweet smile.

To . . . .

Closed in a Vase of Gold, there lie  
Flowers of Lavender; dead and cold  
And void of life as are the walls that hold  
Their dust. Yet in a silent mystery  
They breathe a perfume throughout all  
eternity,  
And ever in a haunting fragrance bless  
A lonely heart with tenderness.

Ashes of Lavender! And a breath  
Can hold forever sweet a Vase of Life,  
And smother even Death in Love-in-Death.

## Tears

So long ago it was, so long ago, —  
And I forgot 'twas but a charge, for, oh!  
It was so sweet to keep, to know.

Only forgive — you see love needs must grow  
When heav'n is near each hour — and it is so,  
So hard just then to let it go.

## Reverie

The night has lost her gage within the pool  
    And wide-eyed she,  
As pass the hours beside the waters cool,  
    Stalks wistfully.

Blue shadows of gray trees mid golden mist,  
    Tower after tower,  
Are caught the while in liquid amethyst  
    With one moon flower.

But she wots not the shadow trees afloat  
    Gray gold between,  
Only she notes her flower — a little boat  
    Upon the sheen.

And when the yellow moon grown pale with  
    age  
    Sinks in the gray,  
She sees — oh, strange! — deep in the pool  
    her gage  
    Drownèd for aye.



## The Gloaming Hour

Alone — a wanderer throughout the streets  
    of day,  
One who but wished to roam  
Not knowing then; ah, now, only to ask, to  
    pray  
For you to take me home.

## Soul-Slumber

Where there is the red of roses,  
Where the heather blowing sighs,  
She in lonely sleep reposes  
With the mould-dust in her eyes:  
And she never knows the flowers  
Bloom above her in their bowers,  
And she never knows the hours  
Drag so slowly where she lies.

Oh, I would that I were lying  
Where the wild June-rose hedge blows,  
Fading as the sun is dying,  
As the day draws to its close;  
For my soul is gone forever,  
Dead with her to answer never,  
And when soul and body sever  
There is death in life, God knows.

## Harvest

Yellow leaves and autumn wind,  
For summer days have flown,  
And now there is a harvesting  
Of that which once was sown.  
Here men together reap their grain,  
Here men reap theirs alone;  
And many there are who reap the grain  
And bind the golden sheaves,  
And many there are whose arms are full  
Of dead and yellow leaves.

## Constancy

Still deep in the lane do the red roses blow  
    And cover quite tenderly  
Their names that were graven long ages ago  
    On the old, old trysting tree.

And though they are dead with their vows all  
    undone,  
    False to troth and fealty,  
And though each frail heart 'neath the far  
    colder stone  
    Now crumbled to dust may be ;

Still deep in the lane do the red roses blow  
    And cover quite tenderly  
Their names that were graven long ages ago  
    On the old, old trysting tree.

## My Silent Years

Like souls they softly slip away;  
The wistful twilight wind  
Is not less still nor sad than they  
That leave but me behind, —  
For all they take and I who stay  
Again may never find.

Good-bye, good-bye, my silent years;  
Some day when I am dead.  
Though now I stand so mute with tears,  
Some day I trust instead  
To find that bourne where reappears  
Each hour remembered, —  
To find again my silent years  
Some day when I am dead.

## Träumerei

There is a place of dreams, Dear, a place of  
dreams

Where you and I, my head upon your breast,  
Ride toward the South. Far in the yellow  
West

There is a fading light, while o'er the moonlit  
sky

The clouds fly from the wind; and you and I  
Just dream together, dreaming thus to rest  
Forever and a day in that far place of dreams.

## Indian Summer

Soft through the purple of the western hills,  
Through veils of haze,  
Wherefrom this peace, — this rest which in  
me thrills, —  
Spirit of Autumn Days?

Where are the questionings of summer  
spent, —  
Or are they with my years, lost memories,  
Spirit of Sweet Content?

Enough to lie and listen as the day grows old  
To melodies  
From that near choir of voices manifold, —  
Spirits of Gathered Leaves.

## Once

Ah, who could know  
That you and I were here  
In days so long ago,  
And plighted troth? Why, dear,  
'Twere sweeter, kinder, better not to know.



## The Empty Cup

To him she gave a goblet red with wine,  
While he but drank and then forgot in fine.  
Saw he how frail the glass was wrought, how  
red

The fire glowed in the crystal bowl? Ah, no,  
Enough for him the draught rememberèd, —  
The cup was empty, let it go.

Oh, far too exquisite a glass for this,  
Thus cast aside save with a quaffing kiss.  
Yet, after all, what matter? Best or worst  
It serves the same to hold the wine, and so  
'Twill just as well allay a craven's thirst, —  
The cup is empty, let it go.

## A Forest Dream

To sleep again beneath the shadowed pines,  
Hearing afar and sad the night-wind softly  
    sighing  
Amid the boughs, — breathing the dewy air  
Wafted so cool upon my brow where I am  
    lying  
At rest, drunk with the perfume of your hair.  
Ah, Spirit of the Pines, I would not care  
Again to wake, if in your arms I might be  
    dying!

## A Song at Sunset

Clouds of saffron, crimson, golden,  
Thrilling veils of gossamer;  
In the shafts of dusk beholden  
Vanished elfin lands recur.

And between an arras rending,  
Turquoise-wrought infinitudes  
Charm the mass of gorgeous blending  
With soft minor interludes.

Oh, the wonder transformation! —  
Roses gold from roses gray  
In an aurate scintillation  
From the leaden clouds of day.

Fabric of the sun's fair weaving,  
Made of stuff too frail to hold;  
Yet that moment of deceiving  
Bursts with rapture manifold.

Promised isles lost in the gloaming,  
Floating on effulgent fire;  
Whither we would rest from roaming,—  
Sunset Land of Heart's Desire.

So once seen those lights far burning,  
From the Grail within the Garde,  
Guide us upward — ever yearning —  
Changed from savage into bard.

Clouds of saffron, crimson, golden,  
Thrilling veils of gossamer;  
In the shafts of dusk beholden  
Vanished elfin lands recur.

## Quatrain

Into this Garden wide, apart and lone  
You came, — nor cast aside the tangled weed.  
Though that was long ago, still from one  
    seed  
Rue and Rosemary ever since have grown.

## Life's Paradox

Wreaths from the censer's brazen grate  
Wandering listlessly  
Against that calm inviolate,  
Wherefore so trouble ye?

Or, do ye seek that mystery  
Because, as I, ye must?  
Knowing what was and is to be  
Are silence, ashes, dust.

## Forgotten

Out far away in the distant street  
I hear the echo of passing feet —  
Your footsteps, Sweet.

It seems so strange, yes, it seems so queer  
That you could wander away from here,  
Without me, Dear.

## Drifts

Did you ever watch the snow on a hill  
Blowing and blowing yet never still,  
Though the wind is low  
And the wastes below  
Rest like the dead in their icy chill? —  
But the snow on the hill  
Is never still.

And at night white wraiths in the ghastly  
gleam,  
Forbidden to sleep, lost lives redeem;  
While the wind shrieks shrill  
Round the frozen hill  
As they cry and call in a maddening scream,—  
For the wraiths on the hill  
Are never still.



## Withal

What if the miles stretch out and bar  
That you and I should meet? why, even still  
You are beneath this very moon and star  
Which I am watching from my lonely hill,  
And I can say low with a happy thrill,  
You are not far, dear heart, you are not far.

## Nöel

Sometimes the world seems harsher when the  
    skies are gray,  
    And more forlorn; —  
Yet not a flower was blooming on the wintry  
    day  
    Ere Christ was born.

So oft times the day sinks to its gloomy end,  
    Where all seems done,  
The twilight colors paint themselves and glow  
    and blend  
    After the sun.

## Solitude

Alone I weave a fancy in the glow,  
While all the world outside is white with  
    snow  
And cheerless. But to me,  
Musing before this fire and drowsily  
Supposing that your head rests on my knee,—  
Seeing the while your great eyes dim-des-  
    cried, —  
Heaven could not be fairer than that snowy  
    world outside.

## Illusion

There are so many flow'rs, so many songs,  
So many fair things in this world of ours;  
While I pretend that one to me belongs,  
One song, one flower, from all these songs  
and flowers.

Although it's blooming for the world I know,  
Although it sings to you as tenderly,  
I think it mine — what if it isn't so? —  
And that those words are really meant for  
me.

## Legende

Across the seas,  
Beyond the hill,  
Within a grove, there lies  
Upon the sward  
An elfin thing  
With madness in her eyes, —  
For she is mad with joy because  
The world seems Paradise.

And in the glades  
Where steal the streams  
Throughout the sunny day,  
She wanders free  
In fantasy  
Along the flowery way,  
And she is never sad, because  
Life is a rondelay.

Yet just because  
She is so pure,  
And in her soul believes,  
'Twere better not  
To cross the hill  
Or sail the sullen seas.

## Quatrain

Oh, the waste of vain doubt and regret-  
ting! —

Shall I seek for the thought that deceives,  
When I find all — the old world forgetting —  
In the whispers of silvery leaves?

## Berceuse

Across the blue the fleecy clouds waft by,  
Too fair of beauty thus so quickly sped, —  
You do not see, for on my heart you lie,  
You do not see, but know, for you are dead!

Sweet, sweet the strain throughout the dark-  
ened air,  
So faint, so far from out the passing day;  
These dying roses crown your tawny hair,  
This fading breeze sings our last roundelay.

It comes from where the snowy clouds are  
gone, —  
So still I listen to its ladened theme,  
For, though I lose you at the morrow's dawn,  
I still may find our garden of a dream.

Our garden where no cross-roads meet and  
part,  
Where roses bloom for aye, not witherèd, —  
You'll lead me through the paths of sleep,  
dear heart,  
There shall I find those clouds where you are  
dead.

## Daphne

Do you not hear her song  
When rosy showers fall  
And forest whispers call  
Along?

Do you not hear her feet  
Now faint among the leaves, —  
Or is 't the wind that grieves  
So sweet?

Do you her face not see  
Mid birches of a glade  
Where sunbeams pass — half maid,  
Half tree?



## Two Chords

Two laden chords oft sound within the  
soul:

One fraught with joy, a great pure major  
theme;

The other, fragile as a half remembered  
dream,

Throbs softly in a strain of minor dole.

And yet of these, the sweeter far to me

Is that grave echo of earth's tragedy.

## October Night

The boughs weave a web where the moon  
looks through  
And the casement sways 'gainst the chilly  
moon, —  
Oh, strange that this sky now so cold and blue  
Once was soft with the clouds of a sunny  
June!

## L'Envoi

Through the mesh of tangled rushes  
    In the stream,  
Glints of gold glow ruddy blushes  
    Gleam for gleam,  
And the Song of Sundown hushes  
    To a dream.

As the breeze is faintly falling  
    Cool and low,  
As the whip-poor-wills are calling  
    To and fro,  
Soft it throbs with pain so palling  
    In the glow.

Silent sobbing song of ending;  
    You and I  
Know the night will soon be bending  
    O'er the sky, —  
Know the silent words past mending  
    Are "good-bye."



*Good-night;  
And may your barque of dreams in twilight  
Float beneath a wooded hill  
Upon a lake of gold, as still  
As death. Good-night.*























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